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SUBJECT: JERUSALEM MEDIA REACTION (10/07): PALESTINIANS NOT  
OPTIMISTIC ABOUT INTERNAL TALKS IN CAIRO

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Main Stories:  
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Al Quds leads with, "Hammad: Dialogue must succeed in order for new elections to proceed." Quoting Palestinian Authority (PA) Presidential political advisor Nimer Hammad, the story notes that the advisor calls upon all Palestinian factions to engage in the internal Palestinian talks to be held in Cairo, "with goodwill." Hammad also calls for no further discussion regarding reports about PA President Abbas running for office in future elections, stating that the issue is not under discussion. Al Ayyam leads with, "Hamis delegation to Cairo presents four vetoes of proposals for a technocrat government and new elections." The paper quotes Hamas objections to establishing a technocrat government, conducting reform to security in Gaza (not the West Bank), disregarding previous election results and "dealing with Gaza separately." The lead story in Al-Hayat Al-Jadida quotes Palestinian Authority (PA) President Abbas confirming that the PA, "will adhere to whatever Arabs decide regarding [Palestinian] national unity. Those who do not accept [the decision], will have to bear the consequences." Abbas' statements came during his visit to India, where he also commented that, "peace negotiations with Israel shall continue towards a comprehensive agreement that does not leave out any issues ... [however], this year will, inevitably, end without a peace agreement." Al Quds' front page reports that Middle East Quartet Envoy Tony Blair will arrive in Egypt on October 9 to prepare for a meeting of representatives from the Quartet, Palestinian and Israeli negotiating teams. The world economic crisis is featured on all front pages. Running

wire stories, Al-Hayat Al-Jadida runs a headline, "black day in world markets," while Al Ayyam's headline notes that the crisis is "rocking Wall Street... U.S. calls for unified global action." Al Quds runs a large, highlighted box with four wire stories from Paris, New York, London, and Tel Aviv, describing the impact of the crisis in each capital.

Al-Hayat Al-Jadida and Al Ayyam report on their front pages that Hamas "legislators" decided in a "parliament session" that Palestinian Authority President Abbas' term will end on January 8, 2009. They also called upon Abbas to task the elections committee with preparing for new elections. Hamas "Legislative Council Deputy Speaker" Ahmad Bahr chaired the session and is quoted calling for national reconciliation, while another Hamas official Faraj Al Ghouli, is quoted stating that the Palestinian Legislative Council's deputy speaker will take office after Abbas.

Al Quds publishes the results of a public opinion poll conducted by Near East Consulting on its front page. The poll shows that 63% of Palestinians want Palestinian Authority President Abbas to continue in office, while 37% do not. The poll also revealed that 88% of Fatah supporters want Abbas to stay in office.

Al Quds notes in a prominent front page story that Palestinian Authority (PA) Prime Minister Fayyad announced that the PA will pay next month's salaries to public employees. Fayyad comments came after the PA's weekly cabinet meeting. He also stated that he expected the financial situation of the PA to be better next year. Al Ayyam's front page highlights comments from the meeting offering the ministers' support for the "steadfastness" of the old city of Hebron and calling for a lifting of Israeli barriers and check-points. Al-Hayat Al-Jadida highlights news that the cabinet has approved funding for cultural activities in Jerusalem to celebrate the city as the "Arab cultural capital of 2009," which is part of a UNESCO-affiliated program.

Al-Hayat Al-Jadida reports in a front page story that Palestinians

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are filing a case with the Israeli Court in Jerusalem to seek \$427,000 in damages for the failure of Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) to evict Israeli settlers from the illegal West Bank outpost of "Migron." The complaint alleges that IDF soldiers protect the 40 settler families instead of implementing an existing Israeli court order to remove them. The court case is the first of its kind before the Israeli courts.

Al Ayyam's front page reports that Hamas leader Masha'al told press that there has been no progress in negotiations for the release of captured Israeli soldier Shalit.

Al-Hayat Al-Jadida's front page runs a short wire story about a UN statement that the war in Afghanistan [against the Taliban] will be lost.

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BLOCK QUOTES:  
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1. Al Quds prints an editorial titled, "No positive signs preceding dialogue" (10/07): "If Hamas rejects the idea of a national consensus government and calls for a national government to be headed by them; and if Hamas insists that President Abbas' term ends on January 9, it is difficult to see that there is any basis for agreement [with other Palestinian parties]. If all Palestinian factions, except Hamas, agree to new legislative and presidential elections, why reject that proposal? Why do some reject it if they enjoy strong popular support? Why doesn't Hamas aspire to winning a sweeping majority in the legislative elections and winning the presidential elections as well, as long as they are confident that they enjoy all the people's trust? Anyway, what is needed is to immediately stop doing anything that might hinder the proposed dialogue or pre-determine its outcome before the talks even begin, if the national interest is really the priority."

2. Al Ayyam publishes an opinion piece by Hani Al Masri titled, "The common enemy: Occupation, Fatah or Hamas?" (10/07): "Continuing the [internal Palestinian] division will lead to the destruction of everything... the main beneficiary, if not the only one, is the occupation. Division won't lead to the ascension of Hamas and downfall of Fatah, but rather it will lead to the downfall and defeat of all parties of the Palestinian national movement, national and Islamic, to the benefit of Israeli alternatives, including first, the status quo with no solution, an Israeli

uni-lateral solution, the reintroduction of the Jordanian option and Egyptian mandate, adoption of an international solution that serves Israeli interests, or a solution that reinforces a canton-state with temporary borders."

Walles